

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

CLAIM LISTING

Please consider the following amendments to the claims of the present application as set forth below. In accordance with the PTO's revised demand format, changes are shown by brackets (for deleted matter) or underlining (for added matter).

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for using [a] at least one computer to [solve problems] process contingent commitments relating to at least one business venture involving [a plurality of] one or more agents, comprising:

receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents to participate in [a problem-solving] a computer-mediated decision-making group;

[submitting an update from the computer to a database to be stored in the a] updating a database, the update includes information about the one or more agents that include contingent commitments between [different ones of] the one or more agents, and rules for processing said contingent commitments to discover [potential] solutions, wherein the contingent commitments include at least one modal operator or quantifier,

[;sending an update notification from the computer to those agents in the problem-solving group according to agent-definable criteria, said notification is in response to the update, wherein the update notification comprises:

an indication that a new agent has joined the problem-solving group;

a description of solutions that are discovered by processing of the contingent commitments according to the rules of the database, with an indication of solution type, for each such solution;

information about the agent; and

information about one or more contingent commitments of said agent.]

Claim 2 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, [wherein] further comprising submitting the information about the one or more agents [is submitted] to the database, wherein the information about the one or more agents includes privacy filters that can be removed only by said one or more agents.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, [wherein] further comprising submitting the information about the one or more contingent commitments to the database, wherein the information of said one or more agents is controlled by privacy filters that can be removed only by said one or more agents.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein said processing said contingent commitments to discover solutions include:

processing said contingent commitments to discover [solution types may be] binding, non-binding, subject to vote, or subject to future contingencies solutions.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein said receiving at the computer the request includes:

receiving at the computer at least one contingent commitment [relating to the problem to be solved].

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein the processing said contingent commitments to discover solutions include:

converting one of said solutions [may be converted] into a binding agreement among the one or more agents or a subset of the one or more agents.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 further comprising:

receiving an identifier specifying form of payment and account information to be used in providing payments related to [problem solving] computer-mediated decision-making group participation and/or transactions arising from solutions.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method of claim 7 wherein the receiving the identifier specifying form of payment and account information to be used in providing payments related to computer-mediated decision-making group participation and/or transactions arising from solutions include:

receiving the identifier specifying the form of payment [includes] as, at least one of, the following: credit card, debit card, Paypal™, c2it™, checking account transfer, or other electronic funds transfer.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method of claim 7, wherein the receiving the identifier specifying form of payment and account information to be used in providing payments further comprising:

receiving an express authorization to charge said account for said [problem solving] computer-mediated decision-making group participation.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method of claim 9 wherein said receiving the express authorization comprises:

receiving the express authorization [is received] from one of the [following] group including: a credit card issuer, a debit card issuer, a bank, or other electronic funds transfer system sponsor.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method of claim 1 wherein said [problem] using the at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to at least one business venture include[s] at least one from the group of:

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning the price of a collection of goods and/or services;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning a non-price scalar value;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process relating to a collection of goods and/or services;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties relating to venture capital investing;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties relating to a joint venture undertaking;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties relating to the development of intellectual property;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties relating to internal corporate strategic planning;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning the scheduling of one or more meetings, events, or processes;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning the early adoption of new products and/or services;

[a negotiation among a plurality of parties concerning terms of settlement of a legal dispute;]

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning disposition of funds for charitable purposes;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning conduct of central bank policy;

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties concerning governmental or inter-governmental policy-making; and

using the at least one computer to process a [negotiation] computer-mediated decision-making process among a plurality of parties relating to group activities.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A computer-based system for processing contingent commitments, comprising:

means for receiving a request for a plurality of agents to participate in a new or existing [problem-solving] computer-mediated decision-making group; and

computer-based means for submitting an update to a database storing information about at least one of the plurality of agents, contingent commitments, and rules for processing information within the database pertaining to said contingent commitments to discover [potential solutions] outcomes that satisfy the contingent commitments, wherein the contingent commitments include at least one modal operator or quantifier[;].

[means for sending an update notification to the at least one agent that is a part of a problem-solving group according to agent-definable criteria, said update notification comprising:

an indication that a new agent has joined the problem-solving group;

a description of solutions, if any, discovered by processing of the contingent commitments according to the rules of the database, with an indication of solution type, for each such solution; information about said agent; and

information about said agent's contingent commitments.]

Claim 13 (currently amended): A method for providing a valuation estimate, the valuation estimate pertaining to one or more quantities, said method comprising:

performing one or more calculations at the request of one or more agents to estimate a value of the [quantity] one or more quantities, said one or more calculations comprising:

selecting one or more models;

selecting one or more sets of inputs;

selecting one or more entities;

further selecting a multi-dimensional error reduction by selecting from the above selected items at least two of the following: a) a plurality of the models, b) a plurality of the sets of inputs, c) a plurality of the entities, or d) a plurality of the agents;

performing the one or more calculations utilizing one or more computers or computing mechanisms using said models, said input sets, and said entities, wherein the calculations provide [a] the multi-dimensional error reduction; and

calculating [weighted] averages for each of said models, said input sets, and said entities to accomplish the multi-dimensional error reduction[; and].

[calculating the statistical information relating to said input models, said input sets, and said entities.]

Claim 14 (currently amended): A method for using [a computer to conduct a negotiation] one or more computing mechanisms by two trading parties to determine a mutually acceptable price for one or more trading items between a first agent and a second agent, the [negotiation] method comprising:

[receiving by said computer a request from a first agent to negotiate with a second agent, wherein the subject of said negotiation is a scalar quantity;]

notifying the first agent by said computer of an opportunity to [negotiate] determine a mutually acceptable price for the one or more trading items with the second agent;

receiving by said [computer] one or more computing mechanisms data related to [a negotiation] the determining the mutually acceptable price between the first agent and the second agent [, wherein the subject of said negotiation is a scalar quantity]; and

performing a calculation using the one or more computing mechanisms to determine whether the [negotiation produces a value acceptable to] determining the mutually acceptable price between the first agent and the second agent results in the mutually acceptable price[:

notifying the first agent and the second agent of the outcome of the negotiation].

Claim 15 (currently amended): The method of claim 14, wherein the [scalar quantity] receiving by said one or more computing mechanisms data related to the determining the mutually acceptable price comprises:

receiving by said one or more computing mechanisms data related to the determining the mutually acceptable price [is] associated with a collection of goods, services, or other assets and/or liabilities, wherein the assets can be either tangible or intangible.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The method of claim 14, wherein within the receiving by said one or more computing mechanisms data related to the determining the mutually acceptable price between the first agent and the second agent, one of said first agent or second agent [agents] is a buyer and a second one of said [agents] first agent or second agent is a seller.

Claim 17 (currently amended): A method for using [a] at least one computer to [manage commitments and] make safe disclosures, comprising:

[receiving at the computer a request from one of a plurality of agents to participate in a problem solving group with the computer;

submitting an update from the computer to a database to store information about agents, contingent commitments, and rules for processing said commitments to discover potential solutions between different ones of the agents, wherein the contingent commitments include at least one modal operator or quantifier;

sending an update notification from the computer to the agents in the problem-solving group according to agent-definable criteria, said update notification is in response to the update, wherein the update notification comprises:

an indication that a new agent has joined the problem-solving group;

a description of solutions, if any, discovered by processing of the contingent commitments according to the rules of the database, with an indication of a solution type, for each such solution;

information about said agent; and

information about one or more contingent commitments of said agent;]

performing one or more computer-based calculations at the request of one or more agents to estimate the value of a quantity, said one or more computer-based calculations comprising

selecting one or more models;

[deciding on model weighting factors for each of the models to be used for valuation;]

selecting one or more sets of inputs;

[determining at least one input weighting factor for each of the sets of inputs used by each model;]

selecting one or more entities[; said agents deciding on entity weighting factors for each of the entities for which the valuation is performed]; performing one or more calculations using said models, [said model weighting factors,] said input sets, [said input set weighting factors,] and said entities[, and said entity weighting factors];

selecting a multi-dimensional error reduction by selecting from the above selected items at least two of the following: a) a plurality of the models, b) a plurality of the sets of inputs, c) a plurality of the entities, or d) a plurality of the agents;

calculating [weighted] averages for each of said models, said input sets, and said entities to accomplish said multi-dimensional error reduction utilizing one or more computers or computing mechanisms [, using said model weighting factors, said input set weighting factors, and said entity weighting factors]; [and]

calculating the median, mean, mode, [and] or standard deviation [of said weighted averages];

determining a mutually acceptable price for one or more trading items [conducting a negotiation] between two agents, [wherein the subject of the negotiation pertains to determining a value of a scalar quantity,] said determining the mutually acceptable price for the one or more trading items [negotiation] comprising:

receiving by said at least one computer a request from an agent to determine the mutually acceptable price [negotiate] with another agent;

notifying an agent by said at least one computer of an opportunity to determine the mutually acceptable price [negotiate] with another agent,

receiving by said at least one computer data related to [a negotiation] the determining the mutually acceptable price for the one or more trading items between two agents; and

performing a calculation to determine whether the [negotiation] determining the mutually acceptable price for the one or more trading items produces a [value] price acceptable to said agents[; notifying said agents of the outcome of a negotiation; and facilitating real-time communication between agents before, during, and after the negotiation session].

Claim 18 (currently amended): The method of claim 17, wherein said performing one or more computer-based calculations comprise: [are facilitated by the one or more computers] performing at least one networked-computer calculations, further comprising transmitting data from at least a first computer to at least one other device.

Claim 19 (currently amended): A method comprising:

a) maintaining a database for managing contingent commitments by maintaining a database storing information, the information pertaining to existing agents, contingent commitments, and rules for processing said commitments to discover [potential solutions] outcomes that satisfy the contingent commitments, wherein the contingent commitments include at least one modal operator or quantifier; and

b) providing a valuation estimate, the valuation estimate providing an estimate as to one or more quantities by performing one or more calculations at the request of one or more agents to estimate the value of a quantity, selecting a multi-dimensional error reduction by selecting from the above selected items at least two of the following: a) a plurality of the models, b) a plurality of the sets of inputs, c) a plurality of the entities, or d) a plurality of the agents, wherein the estimate accomplishes the multi-dimensional error reduction.[; and

c) conducting a negotiation between two agents, said negotiation comprising receiving by said computer a request from an agent to negotiate with another agent, notifying an agent by said computer of an opportunity to negotiate with another agent,

receiving by the computer data related to a negotiation between two agents, performing a calculation to determine whether the negotiation produces a value acceptable to said agents; notifying said agents of the outcome of a negotiation, wherein the subject of said negotiation is a scalar quantity.]

Claim 20 (currently amended): The method of claim 13, wherein the performing the one or more calculations comprise: [said agents perform] performing the one or more calculations using said models, model weighting factors, said input sets, input set weighting factors, said entities, and entity weighting factors; and wherein [calculating] the performing one or more calculations are performed on weighted averages [for each] of at least one of said models, said input sets, and said entities, respectively using at least one said model weighting factors[,] said input set weighting factors, [and said] or said entity weighting factors [satisfy the multidimensional error reduction].

Claim 21 (currently amended): The method of claim 13, wherein the performing one or more calculations at the request of one or more agents to estimate a value of the one or more quantities comprise:

performing one or more calculations at the request of one or more agents to estimate a value of the one or more assets [and] or liabilities.

Claim 22 (currently amended): Computer readable media having computer readable instructions that when executed by a processor causes the processor to perform a method for determining a mutually acceptable price for one or more trading items [conducting a negotiation] between two agents or groups of agents that includes information that is maintained confidential to each agent from the other agent, said determining the mutually acceptable price for the one or more trading items [negotiation] comprising receiving at said computer a request from an agent to determine the mutually acceptable price [negotiate] with another agent, receiving at the computer data related to determining the mutually acceptable price [a negotiation values that describes acceptable values] between two agents, and performing a calculation to determine whether the price is [negotiation

produces a value] acceptable to said agents [, and notifying said agents of the outcome of a negotiation, wherein the subject of said negotiation is a scalar quantity].

Claim 23 (currently amended): The method contained on the computer readable media of claim 22, further comprising [allowing] safely disclosing by both parties [to safely disclose] their true [negotiation] trading strategy.

Claims 24-27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (currently amended): The method of claim 14, further comprising facilitating real-time communication between the first agent and the second agent before, during, [and] or after the negotiation session.

Claim 29 (new): The method of claim 1, wherein the using at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to at least one business venture comprises:

using at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to one or more operating companies.

Claim 30 (new): The method of claim 1, wherein the using at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to at least one business venture comprises:

using at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to one or more private investment opportunities.

Claim 31 (new): The method of claim 1, wherein the contingent commitments produces one or more contingent solutions.

Claim 32 (new): The method of claim 1, wherein the using at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to at least one business venture comprises:

using at least one computer to process contingent commitments relating to at least one from the group of pension funds, institutional money managers, venture capitalists, angel investors, and other qualified investors.

Claim 33 (new): The method of claim 1, further comprising sending an update notification from the computer to those agents in the computer-mediated decision-making group according to agent-definable criteria, said update notification is in response to the update, wherein the update notification comprises:

- an indication that a new agent has joined the computer-mediated decision-making group;

- a description of solutions that are discovered by processing of the contingent commitments according to the rules of the database, with an indication of solution type, for each such solution;

- information about the new agent; and

- information about one or more contingent commitments of said new agent.

Claim 34 (new): The method of claim 14, further comprising notifying the first agent and the second agent of the outcome of the [negotiation] determining a mutually acceptable price.

Claim 35 (new): The method of claim 14, wherein said receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents comprises:

- receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents requesting to choose different units of value.

Claim 36 (new): The method of claim 14, wherein said receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents comprises:

- receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents requesting to assign serial weights to successive rounds of a computer-process.

Claim 37 (new): The method of claim 14, wherein said receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents comprises:

- receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents requesting to assign paired serial weights to successive rounds of a computer-process.

Claim 38 (new): The method of claim 14, wherein one of said agents is an employee, and any other of said agents is an employer of the employee.

Claim 39 (new): The method of claim 36, wherein said receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents comprises:

receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents relating to an employee's compensation.

Claim 40 (new): The method of claim 14, wherein said receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents comprises:

receiving at the computer a request from at least one of the one or more agents relating to an online marketplace.

Claim 41 (new): The method of claim 19, further comprising:

determining a mutually acceptable price for one or more trading items between two agents, said determining the mutually acceptable price for the one or more trading items comprising notifying an agent by said computer of an opportunity for determining the mutually acceptable price with another agent, receiving by the computer data related to the determining the mutually acceptable price between the two agents, performing a calculation to determine whether the determining the mutually acceptable price produces a value acceptable to said agents.